Confidential.

Rajaprapanchapravina
Mr. N. MADHAVA RAU, B.A., B.L.,
Member of Council.

PUBLIC OFFICES,
Bangalore, 15th May 1941.

My dear Sir Charles,

Sir Mirza M.Ismail has passed on to me your Confidential letter dated the 12th May 1941, regarding the appointment of the President of the Legislative Council, with the following observations:-

"I have already made my recommendations to His Highness and I see no reason to change my view in any way. I shall be obliged if the First Member will kindly submit his own and the Second Member's views to His Highness direct in the matter."

I have accordingly consulted the Second Member and our views on the subject are noted below:-

The Committee on Constitutional Reforms in Mysore, 1939 observed in Para 187 of its report, that it was high time to give the Legislative Council the privilege of having its own President outside the Executive to preside over its deliberations and regulate its business. It proposed, therefore, that the Council should in future have a non-official President elected by the House itself, subject to the approval of His Highness the Maharaja; but as the conduct of business in a deliberative assembly is a task which requires experience, it further recommended that for the first term, the President might be nominated by His Highness the Maharaja. This recommendation was accepted by the Government and is embodied in the Government of Mysore Act.

The Council considered that the first President, might, with advantage, be a retired official of high status unconnected with politics, so that he might command prestige both in and outside the House and help in establishing sound parliamentary conventions.

In making this recommendation, the Council had in view the considerations urged and the practice followed in British India when legislatures were constituted under the Government of India Act, 1919.

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At that time the expediency of de-officialising the Presidentship of these bodies was still open to doubt.

In Mysore, emphasis is placed on the President being a non-official and the fact that he is to be given the rank and status of a Minister as well as a substantial salary has made the place a coveted one. While there are certain obvious advantages in appointing a high retired official for this post, it seems to us that in our present state of affairs a non-official gentleman ~~who,~~ with experience in public life might well be considered for the office. It is not difficult to find a few gentlemen of this type who are not aggressive politicians or who would be willing to give up politics during the period they occupy the Presidential Chair. The choice of such a person is likely to be appreciated as a political concession. There is also considerable force in the view expressed in the latter part of your letter that such a ~~selection might~~ facilitate the solution of the difficult problem of giving representation to the principal communities in the Government.

Yours sincerely

M Visvesvaraya

Sir Charles Todhunter, K.C.S.I;

Private Secretary to His Highness
the Maharaja of Mysore,

Mysore.

P.S.- I enclose a short note reproducing the views expressed by various authorities on the choice of President for legislative bodies in India.